

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated May 16, 2008. In view of the foregoing amendments and following representations, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

By the above amendment, claims 1, 5, 6 and 8 are amended; and claims 2-4 are cancelled. Thus, claims 1 and 5-13 are currently pending in the present application.

On page 2 of the Office Action, claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph due to a lack of antecedent basis for "the side portion." In response claim 1 has been amended to provide antecedent basis for the side portion recited in claim 6.

Next, on pages 2-3 of the Office Action, claims 1-3 and 6-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Young III (U.S. Patent No. 5,920,950). Also, on page 4 of the Office Action, claims 1-8 and 10-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dal Palu (GB Patent No. 2156666). It is submitted that the present invention, as embodied by the amended claims, now clearly distinguishes over the Young and Dal Palu references for the following reasons.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to include the features originally set forth in claims 2-4, which have been canceled. Also, claim 1 has been amended to require that the side portion includes a mounting hole (45, 46; 52D) into which the mounting pin of the wiper blade main-body fits, and that the fixing member is adapted to be mounted on the upper sides of the fitting member and the hook portion. Furthermore, as described above, claim 1 now recites that "the wiper blade main-body includes a mounting pin which extends orthogonally to the

longitudinal direction of the wiper blade". This language was originally recited in claim 8.

As a result of the above amendment, the present claims are substantially identical to the claims that have been allowed in counterpart applications in Japan and Europe.

The present invention, as defined in amended claim 1, requires, *inter alia*, that the fixing member (22, 52) of the joint member (20, 30) includes a front portion (41, 52B) and side portions (42, 43, 52C) to form a case-like structure for covering the fitting member and the hook portion of a wiper arm, and that the fixing member includes the mounting hole (45,46; 52D) formed in the side portion of the fixing member for receiving a mounting pin of a wiper blade.

The claimed arrangement allows the joint member to tightly hold the fitting member and the hook portion of a wiper arm. In particular, the engagement of the mounting pin into the mounting hole of the fixing member enables the fixing member to be firmly mounted on the fitting member so that the hook portion of the wiper arm is securely held between the fixing member and the fitting member. As will be demonstrated below, the arrangement claimed in claim 1 is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references, taken alone or in combination.

Young III discloses an adapter body 20 that is connected to a latch member 30 through a flexible hinge member 32. The adapter body 20 is quite different from the fixing member of the present invention because the adapter body 20 is positioned on the front end of the latch member 30 and does not cover the latch member 30. Accordingly, the Young III reference does not disclose each and every limitation of amended claim 1, and therefore cannot anticipate claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b).

Dal Palu discloses an intermediate element 5 having two constituent parts 11 and 11', and a flexible connecting portion 12. The constituent parts 11 and 11' include channels 13, 14 and 15 for fitting into a hook portion of the wiper arm 6. The constituent part 11 or 11' is different from the fixing member of the subject invention because the constituent parts 11 and 11' do not have a side portion including a mounting hole for fitting to a mounting pin. Accordingly, the Dal Palu reference does not disclose each and every limitation of amended claim 1, and therefore cannot anticipate claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b).

Further, on page 6 of the Office Action, claims 1,2, 7, 8, 12 and 13 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting over claims 2, 4, 8 and 9 of copending application no. 10/529,879. As noted above, claim 1 has been substantially amended, and this rejection should no longer be applicable. The claims in application no. 10/529,879 are directed to a connector for receiving a side pin of a wiper arm. In other words, the connector of the copending application includes a structure for receiving a side pin of a wiper arm (i.e. portion 33 of the base member 21 and the recess 47, 48 of the locking member 22). In contrast, the joint member of claim 1 merely includes a structure for receiving a hook portion of a wiper arm. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the obviousness-type double patenting rejection over the claims of copending Application No. 10/529,879. Note that the claims in the copending application will be amended to more clearly define this difference.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the present application is now clearly in condition for allowance. The Examiner therefore is requested to pass this case to issue.

In the event that the Examiner has any comments or suggestions of a nature necessary to place this case in condition for allowance, then the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney by telephone to promptly resolve any remaining matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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